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4 Pilots 'CIA Airmen,'
Magazine Reports

BY LILLIAN FOSCUE

"We always thought it was the CIA," said a relative of one of four Birmingham fliers who died April 19, 1961, flying at the Bay of Pigs.

In the current issue of Look magazine, David Wise and Thomas B. Ross declare the men were "American CIA airmen."

The four, Thomas Willard Ray, Leo Francis Baker, Riley W. Shamburger Jr. and Wade Carroll Gray, were hired through a Miami lawyer, Alex E. Carlson.

He said Carlson's organization, Double-Chek, had put some anti-Castro Cubans in touch with the fliers early in April. He said the organization had requested its identity remain confidential.

The men had been hired to fly cargo, Carlson said.

In May, checks began arriving every two weeks for the four widows. First made out for \$225 apiece, the checks were signed by Carlson, Look Magazine says.

Checks Increase

Later the article said, the checks were increased to \$245 apiece and were issued by Bankers Trust Co. of New York.

The Look article, adapted from a book, "The Invisible Govern-

ment," lists the several communications to members of the families in which any knowledge on the part of the CIA is denied.

A letter from Brig. Gen. Godfrey T. McHugh, Air Force Aide to President Kennedy, to the mother of Riley W. Shamburger Jr., says:

"If any information is ever obtained on circumstances surrounding the loss of your son, you will be informed immediately. Unfortunately, at present neither CIA nor any other government agency possesses the slightest pertinent information on your son's disappearance," wrote General McHugh.

In February of last year, Sen. Everett M. Dirksen, Senate minority leader, said four American fliers had been killed at the Bay of Pigs. The author in Look said a month before

that Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy had said no Americans died at the Bay of Pigs.

On March 6, President John Kennedy was asked if the four men who lost their lives in the Bay of Pigs invasion were employees of the government or the CIA.

He answered, "They were serving their country. The flight that cost them their lives was a volunteer flight, and that while because of the nature of their work it has not been a matter of public record, as it might be in the case of soldiers or sailors, I can say they were serving their country. . . ."

Families of the four say they have heard nothing further.

Reluctant to discuss the checks, the four widows have picked up their lives as best they can. Mrs. Margaret Ray and her two children have moved to Montgomery.

The others still live in the Birmingham area. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Shamburger has married and is living in Woodlawn, her grandmother said.

The Grays had no children. Baker is survived by his widow and three children, one by a previous marriage.

Gen. Reid Doster, command-

ing general of Alabama Air National Guard, and about a dozen men from the Guard entered into contracts with the CIA, the article says.

General Doster, who has repeatedly refused to comment on the involved happenings of the death of the four and events following, yesterday again repeated, "There is nothing official I can say."